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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Slow deployment of civilian police monitors affecting confidence of people in Serb-controlled suburbs of Sarajevo, says UN spokesman.
- Iran proposes compromise language for draft comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty at Conference on Disarmament.
- Special Committee on Charter begins discussion of compensation to third States affected by Chapter VII sanctions.
- UNESCO says world solar summit will examine how renewable energy can protect environment and bring energy services to rural and remote areas.
- DPI publishes blue book on Iraq-Kuwait conflict.

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The slow deployment of officers from the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) was causing fear and a lack of confidence among the population in Serb-controlled suburbs of Sarajevo, a UN spokesman said today. Long lines of tractors and trucks, packed with personal effects, were jamming the roads to the airport and Pale. Fear and anxiety was spreading from Vogosca to other Serb-held suburbs, which would come under the authority of the Bosnian Federation on March 19. Many residents had already left and schools and banks were closing down, she said.

The United Nations did not want the peace to create tens of thousands of new refugees or new internally displaced persons, the spokesman continued. People must be given a sense of security so they would stay in their homes. Already, 54 IPTF monitors were patrolling the roads between Vogosca and Sarajevo and 19 more would be deployed in Vogosca tomorrow, when 85 Bosnian Federation police were expected to enter the suburb. Up to 25 Serb police might be included in the Federation force, she added.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

To date, 295 civilian police out of an authorized IPTF strength of 1,721 were serving throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and another 174 were in Zagreb waiting to be deployed. There had been many pledges of police for the IPTF, the spokesmen said, and urged Governments to "please put these guys on planes".

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Iran has proposed compromise language for the text of a draft comprehensive test ban treaty, according to a UN Radio report from Geneva. The Iranian Foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, told the Conference on Disarmament, which is meeting in Geneva, that it was important to perceive a middle ground and develop a package which represented a balanced compromise between the various positions of Governments. The General Assembly has called on the Conference to conclude negotiations on a comprehensive test ban treaty by the middle of the year so it can be presented to the Assembly before the end of its fiftieth anniversary session in September.

Dr. Velayati offered several proposals to bridge the gap between Non-Aligned members of the Conference and some of the five nuclear powers -- the United States, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, China and France. He suggested the treaty could include a statement of intent to agree on the total elimination of all nuclear weapons, within a time bound framework. Referring to China's position that peaceful nuclear testing should still be permitted, he said the door should stay open for possible future scientific research on civilian applications, but only if their usefulness could be demonstrated and recognized universally and if the tests were strictly monitored.

The test ban treaty should rely on internationally collected data rather than on national monitoring systems, he continued. Intrusive on-site inspections could be conducted if violations were suspected or if two thirds of the future test ban treaty executive council agreed so as to prevent frivolous or abusive inspections. Nuclear test sites should be closed and equipment specifically designed for nuclear testing should be destroyed.

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The right to compensation for third States affected by United Nations sanctions should not be a precondition when applying measures under Chapter VII of the Charter, according to the representative of Italy, Mauro Politi, who was also speaking on behalf of the European Union. He was addressing the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization.

The establishment of a new permanent mechanism, such as a trust fund, would not be a viable solution or an appropriate response to the problems of third States as they implemented sanctions, Mr. Politi said. The European Union was providing economic and humanitarian help to third States affected by UN sanctions, especially in relation to the situation in the former Yugoslavia. In 1995, the Union budgeted 83.5 million European currency units for border crossing infrastructure projects in the Balkans.

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Next September's world solar summit in Zimbabwe will aim to increase understanding of how renewable sources of energy can protect the environment and provide energy services, particularly to rural and remote areas. According to an official from the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Luis G. Marques, it was hoped the summit would adopt a 10-year plan of action for renewable energy in the developing world. He was addressing the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development as it met at UN Headquarters yesterday.

Heads of State and Government are expected to attend the summit, at the personal invitation of Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe. Mr. Marques said that many had expressed skepticism when the summit process began but someone had to "get the ball rolling". There was a real need to improve the lives of 2.5 billion people who had no access to modern energy supplies. Access to renewable energy would improve their health, increase educational opportunities and foster economic development which could reduce urban migration.

Several experts at the Committee meeting asked for information on the two to three billion dollar fund for 300 projects proposed for the 10 years after the summit. Others inquired about a possible list of the projects and how they would be financed. He did not expect 300 projects to be targeted prior to the summit, but he did foresee that number as being realistic over a 10 year period. The question of a global fund would have to be decided at the summit, he added.

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A comprehensive account of the United Nations response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait is given in the ninth volume of the "Blue Book" series published this month by the Department of Public Information (DPI). The book is titled The United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict, 1990-1996. Its publication coincides with the resumption of discussions between the UN and Iraq on implementation of a Security Council resolution to ease human suffering through the limited sale of Iraqi oil. In his introduction to the book, the Secretary-General writes that throughout its involvement, one of the UN's main concerns has been to alleviate the suffering of Iraqi civilians.

The "Blue Books" series covers major developments of the past fifty years in which the United Nations has played a leading role. The series is designed to provide primary research and reference tools to historians, policy makers, journalists and others interested in a deeper understanding of work of the Organization.

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